



Approved For Release 2004/10/12 : CIA-RDP81M00980R001400080161-1

01C-78-000
Dept of Defense

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20301

JAN 4 1978

Executive Registry
78-8026

Admiral Stansfield Turner
Director of Central Intelligence
Washington, D.C. 20505

Dear Stan:

I have reviewed your memorandum delivered on December 1, 1977, with respect to a single point of contact for responses to Congressional committee requests for intelligence information. I believe that the present system works quite well and cannot agree to a change to a more centralized system. My reasons are as follows:

- (1) Use of a single focal point for all replies to the Congress increases the administrative burden on the Executive Branch and decreases the ability to respond in a timely manner.
- (2) A single memorandum of understanding has substantial disadvantages because the needs and circumstances of the various entities of the Intelligence Community are quite different and those differences are reflected appropriately in individual arrangements with the Congress.
- (3) The Intelligence Community's responsiveness to requests from Congress has been quite good during this Administration and centralization would not assist in the evaluation effort because responsiveness should be assessed on a qualitative, not quantitative basis.
- (4) The current system is quite adequate to protect intelligence sources and methods because there is a good coordination with the DCI and a sufficient level of care exercised by the agencies with respect to disclosures to the Congress.

I will, of course, keep you informed about such requests and our responses to them, and hope you would do the same for me.

On a related subject, I believe a more immediate concern with respect to disclosure of intelligence information arises in our dealings with the courts. We have a substantial need for a single spokesman to vouch for the necessity to protect sources and methods through the execution of necessary affidavits in legal proceedings. As I understand it, your position in that regard is that each agency head should vouch for the information produced by his agency, rather than having the DCI execute such affidavits on behalf of the Community. Litigation about intelligence matters is growing at a pace that I think requires a re-examination of that position.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Charles".

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